At the cutting-edge of the big-data AND ANALYTICS EDUCATION SPACE

Having been awarded a host of honours, Data Brio Academy (DBA) is producing well-trained professionals, besides collaborating with industry to maximise the domain's potential

SOMA BANERJEE
CEO, Data Brio Academy

ONE OF the early entrants in the analytics education space, Data Brio Academy kick-started analytics and big data courses in 2012. In the last few years, there has been a huge demand for Big Data Engineers and Analytics professionals.

The Big Data programme is designed to prepare technology professionals for careers in Big Data. In the programme, they are given a lot more exposure on the technical side while learning big-data technology stack like Hadoop, Spark, Pig, Hive, NoSQL, MapReduce, HBase, Sqoop, Oozie, Flume, etc. Our Business Analytics programme is focused on equipping candidates with the business side of analytics. The focus there is more on solving analytics problems through advanced statistical techniques along with predictive modeling, optimisation and machine-learning techniques. The programme covers tools like R, Python, IBM SPSS, SAS, Tableau, Power BI, Watson Analytics, etc. The Big Data Programme, on the other hand, is for technology professionals who want to build their career on the technology and big data track.

Both the programmes of Data Brio Academy (DBA) have grown to be popular in the industry over the course of time and, in a rare honour, DBA has been selected by Technology Development Cell, Ministry of MSME, for imparting training on analytics and big data across the country. DBA is also exclusively tied up with the All India Management Association (AIMA) for on-line as well as face-to-face programmes for aspiring students and the corporates. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) conducted a couple of workshops on Big Data Analytics with DBA. In 2017, Webel — a government of West Bengal enterprise — invited DBA to roll out Big Data Analytics courses under joint collaboration in the state.

DBA took a lead in adding Big Data Hadoop courses in Eastern India in early 2013, and has since enjoyed the early mover advantage in this field.

Another feather in DBA's cap has been the fact that it is the first institute in the country to be endorsed by NASSCOM on data science curriculum pack and has faculties who are certified by NASSCOM on Big Data Analytics.

The awareness of and demand for analytics programmes have increased manifold. So has the number of programmes on offer — with renowned education brands also joining the fray. DBA has carved a definite niche for itself in this competitive space and remains a compelling choice for aspirants.

CEO Soma Banerjee lists the following reasons for DBA's success:

- A comprehensive, contemporary curriculum that addresses the three pillars of techniques (statistics and computing algorithm), technology (tools) and hands-on caselets and projects.
- A very niche profile of faculties directly from the analytics industry with hands-on experience from companies like Accenture, GE, Infosys, IBM, NIIT, Siemens, AC Nilsen, Fidelity, etc. The faculty members hail from institutions like BITS-Pilani, ISI, Michigan State University, Perdue University, etc.
- Effective teaching methodology (with a mix of lectures, case discussions, projects)
- A well-established corporate internship & placement programme that helps aspirants

We spoke to her and she highlighted the following features

"Our courses are built on great content from industry experience and latest trends from projects. Our research shows that a lot of participants choose DBA because of the coverage of its curriculum and the clear preference for faculties who are with analytics industry experience and not coming from generic background of IT or training.

We also believe that placements are not a stand-alone activity. They are a natural fallout of following the right process — so the participants are given multiple assignments with caselets from the industry with data; only once they are able to solve them inde-

pendently do they get confident of the methods they been taught, having been able to apply the same; they go through an intensive session on interview skills; and last but not the least they go through projects coming from the relevant vertical and domain. The project type depends on the background of the students as also the current domain he/she is working on if not a fresher. For example, someone coming from the banking sector for an analytics course is given a project on credit risk analysis or predicting fraudulent transaction in the insurance sector. This helps the participants in getting an opportunity for an interview option and his/her past background also gives them an advantage in terms of the business knowledge in applying the data science techniques. We are proud that our alumni are now working for corporates like TCS, Bridgei2i, TESCO, NEC, PwC, Accenture, LatentView, TataCliq, ANZ, HCL, HSBC, IBM, Erricson, FirstAmerican, among others.

Partly because of our training, and partly because of the high demand for analytics professionals, our alumni have grown considerably in their careers in the last 4 years or so. And finally, if we grow our numbers year on year and batch on batch, something must be going right! A large majority of our new participants get mentored by our alumni before joining corporates, including being called for interviews through employee referral programmes — and the alumni have been consistent in endorsing the programme strongly to whoever reaches out to them."

DBA has been actively engaged in corporate Big Data Analytics training programmes and it is worth mentioning that it plays a key role in the BFSI domain as well. DBA has delivered specialised training programmes for some of the niche players in the BFSI segment like Green Delta Insurance Company (GDIC), British Council Management Services(BCMS), and First American.

GDIC is the biggest non-banking financial leasing company of Bangladesh and DBA delivered a hands-on programme for their financial team on SAS VA. It helped the team to have intelligent BI dashboards for their clients and do product performance analysis. The training also focused on developing credit risk analysis and predict loan defaulters across

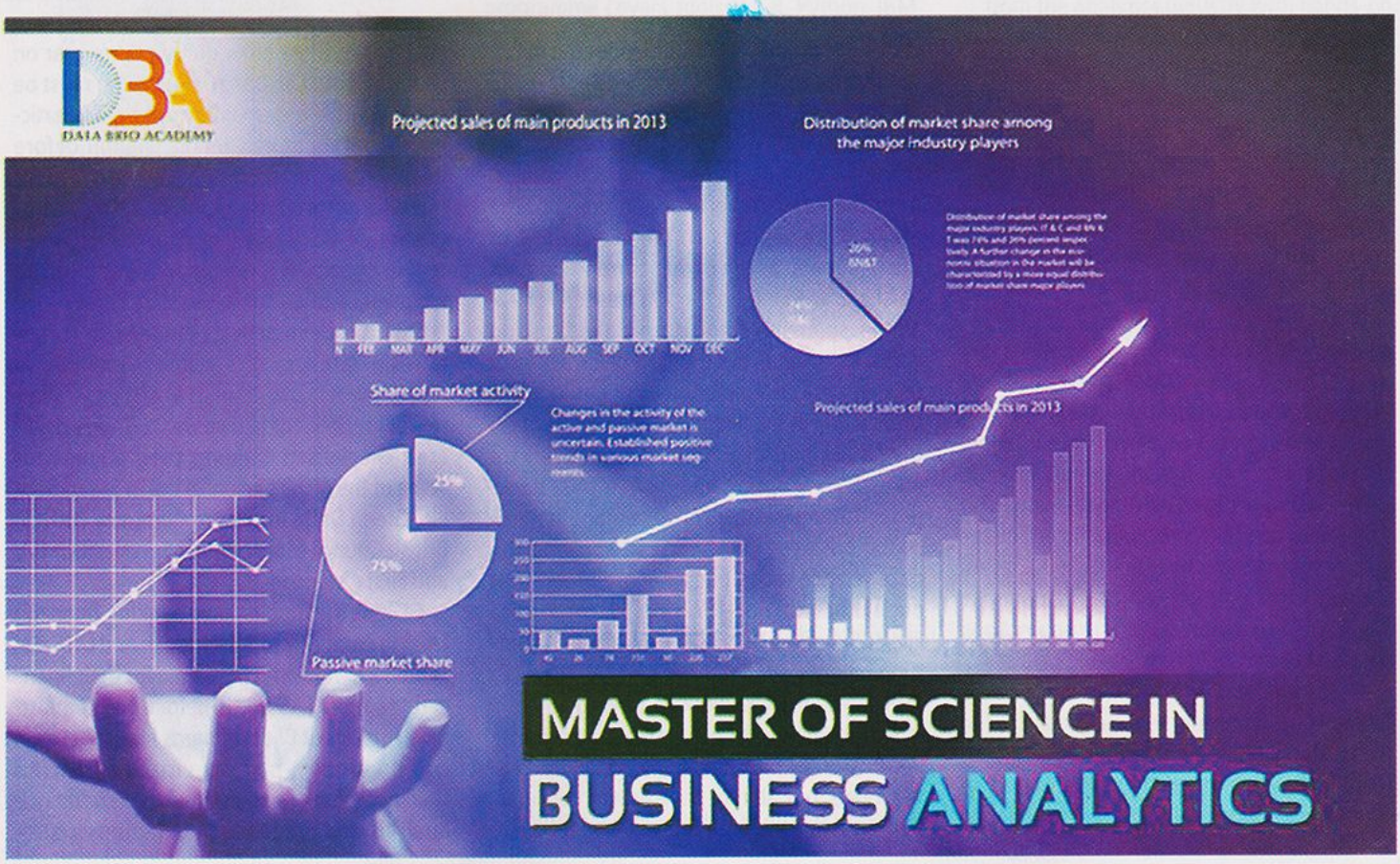
DBA PLANS TO CONSOLIDATE ITS LEADING POSITION IN TERMS OF CURRICULUM, CASE ANALYSIS AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENTS

verticals for their business.

British Council Management Services engaged DBA to train their executives to get more insights in managing financial processing for their entities across 38 countries for Accounts Payable (AP) and Accounts Receivable (AR).

First American is the one of the largest title insurance companies in north America. DBA got engaged with them to impart skills on Big Data Analytics to help them solve a couple of business problems. The training focused on intensive statistical methods for analysis, including that of sentiment analysis using advanced semantic algorithms to get more insights from property ownership and release documents as well as predicting fraudulent insurance transactions through advance machine learning programmes. The company has been successful in implementing these algorithms on data kept on Hive platform for a couple of counties so far and plans to extend the same to other counties in a phased manner.

DBA has been awarded the Education Excellence Award by Skill India and Indus Foundation in 2017, and been selected as the Institute of the Year by Higher Education Review magazine and as the Best Data Science Institute by SiliconIndia magazine in 2015.

DBA plans to consolidate and continue to be at the leading edge in terms of curriculum, case analysis and industry engagements. There will be ongoing efforts to continuously enhance the real-world project component so that students get more exposure to end-to- end project lifecycle on specific verticals. We are viewing growth in a couple of ways — offer our academic expertise to emerging institutes that wish to run programmes in analytics and data science; we are already engaged with leading institutes in Andhra Pradesh, NCR region and West Bengal as of now. And, to create a unique industry approved 'Standard Assessment Model' for data science in tune with the likes of GMAT/GRE. Moving forward, as this domain evolves further, and keeping in mind the busy schedule of industry participants in our face-to-face programmes, DBA is working to extend the current additional access to online learning modules to even more tools and methods.

DBA is committed to creating well-trained professionals ready for the cutting-edge analytics industry and will strive its best to fulfil the dream of 'Make in India' ■